

RAIN GARDENS

RiverSmart Homes

Clean Water Starts in Your Yard

Stormwater Runoff and the District of Columbia

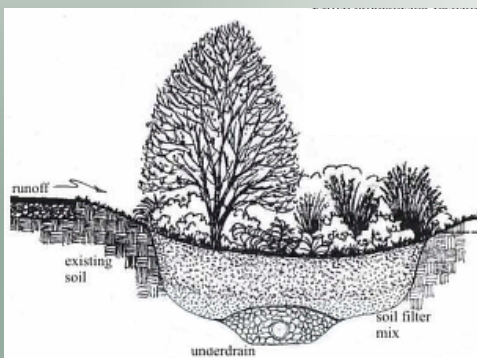
Stormwater runoff is rainwater that flows off impervious surfaces such as rooftops, driveways, roads, sidewalks and sometimes even lawns. Stormwater runoff travels from these surfaces to our streams, picking up pollutants such as oil and grease from our roadways and driveways as it goes. Nutrients from lawn fertilizers and bacteria from pet waste may also be picked up by stormwater and carried to our streams.

A rain garden in your yard will help reduce stormwater runoff, which will help the District's streams and rivers

Rain Gardens Defined

A rain garden is a small garden landscaped to collect, store, and infiltrate stormwater runoff in its loose underlying soil. Rain gardens are strategically placed to intercept stormwater runoff and hold it until it can be fully absorbed into the ground.

Typical rain gardens are populated with native plants—indigenous species that were present here prior to the settlement of Europeans. Ornamental horticultural plants that are non-invasive can also be excellent choices.



*Profile of a rain garden.
Runoff drains through the soil filter mix,
then into the underdrain where partial
groundwater recharge is achieved.*

Benefits of Rain Gardens to the Homeowner

Rain gardens require little maintenance once the plants are well established, and they are a beautiful addition to any property. Furthermore, rain gardens:

- Minimize the need for mowing, pesticides, pruning, irrigation and fertilization;
- Require minimal watering;
- Cost less to maintain than conventional landscapes stabilize soils and prevent erosion; and
- Can be creative and fun, designed with plants of your particular choice.

Did you know?

50% - 70% of household water goes to watering lawns & gardens. Try not watering at the hottest time of the day or when windy. Turn off sprinklers when it's raining.

Benefits of Rain Gardens to the District

The District is promoting the planting of rain gardens because they manage stormwater on-site by intercepting and filtering pollutants such as fertilizers and pesticides, and oil and other automobile fluids washed off of impervious surfaces such as roofs, driveways, turf, roads and parking lots. In addition, rain gardens:

- Increase the amount of water filtering into the ground, which recharges local and regional aquifers;
- Help to protect communities from flooding and drainage problems; and
- Provide valuable habitat for local birds, butterflies and many beneficial insects.



DDOE

DISTRICT DEPARTMENT
OF THE ENVIRONMENT

*** GOVERNMENT OF THE
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Adrian M. Fenty, Mayor



How to Have a Rain Garden

Rain gardens are each one-of-a-kind. They vary widely in size, and can fit into many odd shapes and spaces. They can be designed to individual site characteristics, factoring in topography, soils, drainage patterns and sun exposure. There are many readily available resources to assist you in installing a rain garden.

Rain Garden Resources

Rain Gardens: A how to manual for homeowners

www.lowimpactdevelopment.org/raingarden_design/downloads/RaingardenHow2HomeownerUWExtension.pdf

Rain Gardens: A household way to improve water quality in your community

clean-water.uwex.edu/pubs/pdf/home.gardens.pdf

Virginia Department of Forestry

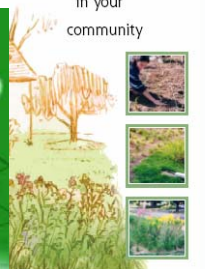
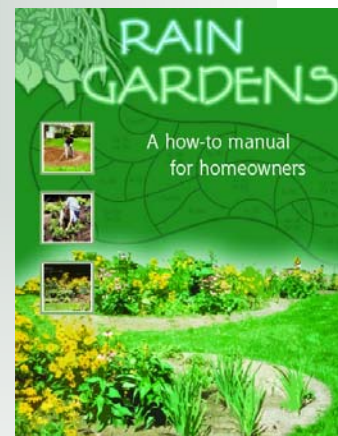
www.dof.virginia.gov/rfb/rain-gardens.shtml

10,000 Rain Gardens

www.rainkc.com

Rainscapes: The Irrigation Professionals

www.rainscapes.com



Want a Rain Garden in Your Yard? RiverSmart Homes Can Help.

The District Department of the Environment (DDOE) RiverSmart Homes is a program specifically designed for District residents. The program offers incentives to homeowners interested in reducing stormwater pollution from their properties. Rain gardens are one of the environmentally friendly landscaping practices available through this program.

For more information, visit: ddoe.dc.gov/riversmarthomes